The Commission also took *Suo-motto* cognizance on 09-07-2002 of a news item titled "Coercive measures run counter to Population Policy"appcaring in the Times of India dated 05-06-2002 wherein it was mentioned that some States *viz.* Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra are preparing to use coercive population control methods in complete violation of national policy and which is also in violation of Human Rights.

The Commission issued notices to the above mentioned five States for a reply within 6 weeks. Reply from the States of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh are still awaited. The Commission is still seized of the matter.

Preventive health care

3139. SHRI RAJUPARMAR:

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that in order to provide health care solutions, focus is now shifting to preventive health care in most of the advanced countries in which early diagnosis plays a crucial role; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take for early diagnosis by procuring health care equipments of international standards ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b): Yes, Sir. There is an increased focus on preventive health care through the medium of preventive health check-ups in diagnosing diseases in the early stages, thereby increasing the chances of recovery. This is specifically so in cancer and cardiac cases. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) is an integral part of all National Health Programmes including these for control of major non-communicable diseases. Through IEC activities efforts are made to generate awareness about benefits of preventive health care. As part of the strategy of preventive healh care, under the Immunization Programme, Vaccinations to infants and pregnant women are given for control of vaccine preventable diseases namely, childhood tuberculosis, diphtheria, pertussis, polimyelitis, measles and neonatal tetanus. For preventing blindness, prophylactic Vitamin 'A' is given to children and prevention of anemia, Iron and Folic Acid tablets are given to children and pregnant women. In addition to these vaccines and medicines, certain equipments are also utilized for early diagnosis. Under the National Cancer Control Programme, Central assistance is provided for purchase of equipments, which include a Cobalt Unit besides oilier

equipments towards development of Oncology wings in Government medical hospitals in the country. Further, financial assistance for installation of mammography unit is provided to non-governmental charitable organizations having a Cobalt machine.

Increase in the number of elderly persons in the country

3140. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA :

SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a report released by UN recently has stated that India is fast aging and the number of elderly persons is expected to grow from 77 million in 2000 to about 141 million by 2020;

(b) whether it is a fact that most of the older people do not have adequate health care and social protection;

(c) whether Government have or purpose to formulate a National Social Security and Health Care Policy for the elderly persons;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) A report of United Nations Fund for Population Activities (World Population 2002) points out that India's older population is expected to grow from 77 million in 2000 to about 141 million in 2020.

National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP) was announced in January, 1999 by nodal Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment. NPOP aims at providing a better and meaningful life for older persons. The major areas of intervention visualized in this policy include financial security, health care and nutrition, shelter/housing, protection of life and property and to provide opportunities for development of the potential of the older people. To operationalise NPOP the nodal Ministry has set up National Council for Older Persons (NCOP).

The Government has also announced National Health Policy 2002 with an objective to achieve an acceptable standard of good health amongst the general population including the geriatric population of the country. This policy emphasises increased access to the decentralised public health system by